**He Has Risen**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Mark 16:1-20**

**Wednesday Evening**

**November 13, 2019**

**1 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.**

Saints, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary had been at Jesus’ cross and had followed Joseph so that they would know where he had been buried (15:47).

Salome had also been at the cross; she was probably the mother of the disciples James and John. The women went home and kept the Sabbath as the law required, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. So they purchased burial spices before returning to the tomb early Sunday morning.

Anointing a body was a sign of love, devotion, and respect. Bringing spices to the tomb would be like bringing flowers to a grave today. Since they did not embalm bodies in Israel, they would use perfumes as a normal practice. The women undoubtedly knew that Joseph and Nicodemus had already wrapped the body in linen and spices.

They probably were going to do a simple external application of the fragrant spices. Since Jesus’ body was buried so rapidly after he was crucified, they had been unable to perform the anointing before Jesus’ burial.

**2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.**

Saints, Sabbath had ended at sundown on Saturday, so very early on Sunday morning, the women left their homes, arriving at the tomb just at sunrise. They wasted no time. This further illustrates their misunderstanding of Jesus. He had told them that he would rise from the dead, yet they expected nothing.

**3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?"**

Saints, two of these women had seen where the body had been placed and knew that a huge stone had been rolled across the entrance to the tomb (15:46). Apparently, they were unaware that the tomb had been sealed and a guard set outside it

**Matthew 27:62-66**

62 On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, 63 saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.'

64 "Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first." 65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." 66 So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

So as they approached the tomb, they remembered that the stone would be a problem. They wondered aloud who might be able to roll the stone away so that they could get in.

**4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away--for it was very large.**

Saints, the women needn’t have worried about the stone. Jesus had said he would rise again after three days. In the Jewish reckoning of time, a day included any part of a day; thus, Friday was the first day, Saturday was the second day, and Sunday was the third day. When the women arrived at daybreak, Jesus had already risen.

When they arrived at the tomb, they saw that the large stone had already been rolled aside. Matthew records that there had been an earthquake and an angel of the Lord had descended from heaven, had rolled back the stone, and had sat on it.

**5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.**

Saints, the women entered the tomb. Once inside they were startled to see a young man clothed in a white robe. We learn from Matthew and John that this was an angel. When angels appeared to people, they looked like humans.

The angel spoke reassuringly to the women. They were looking for Jesus the Nazarene, the human being who had been crucified. But Jesus was not there; he had been raised from the dead.The angel invited the women to look into the inner burial chamber and see where they (Joseph and Nicodemus, 15:46) laid his body. John records that the linen cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus’ body were left as if Jesus had passed right through them.

**John 20:6-7**

6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.

Saints, the handkerchief was still rolled up in the shape of a head, and it was at about the right distance from the wrappings that had enveloped Jesus’ body.

**7 But go, tell His disciples--and Peter--that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you."**

Saints, the women who had come to anoint a dead body were given another task, that of proclaiming the Resurrection to the frightened disciples. The disciples had deserted Jesus in the hour of trial, but the angel’s words held hope of renewal and forgiveness. The disciples were invited to meet Jesus in Galilee—there was work to do. The angel made special mention of Peter to show that, in spite of Peter’s denials, Jesus had not deserted him.

The angel told the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee just as he told you before he died. This was exactly what Jesus had told them during the Last Supper, that he would go ahead of them into Galilee after his resurrection.

Saints, God is still as active in the world as He has always been, and His angels are certainly still at work. Just as angels protected God's people in the past, we can be assured that they are guarding us today.

**Hebrews 13:2**

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

As we obey God's commands, it is quite possible that we may encounter His angels, even if we do not realize it. In special circumstances, God allowed His people to see His unseen angels, so God’s people would be encouraged and continue in His service.

**2 Kings 6:16-17**

16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

**8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.**

Saints, the women fled from the tomb, realizing that they had seen the results of an awesome miracle in the empty tomb and had been in the presence of an angel. They either went straight to the disciples with the news, saying nothing to anyone along the way, or for a time they said nothing out of fear, perhaps expecting the response of disbelief that they eventually did receive from the disciples when they told the story.

**Luke 24:11**

“And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.”

**9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. 11 And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.**

**Hebrews 11:6**

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

After the women had told the disciples about the Resurrection, and Peter and another disciple they had gone to see for themselves.

**John 20:3-9**

3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. 4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. 5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in.

6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. 9 For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

Mary Magdalene apparently had returned to the tomb and was weeping (John 20:11).

**John 20:11**

“But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb.”

Although Mary Magdalene has been mentioned earlier in this Gospel as one of the women at the cross and at the tomb, Mark reminded his readers of the reason for her devotion to Jesus: He had cast out seven demons from her. This devoted woman was the first person who saw the resurrected Christ.

**12 After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. 13 And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either.**

Saints, at another point, Jesus appeared to two of the disciples who had disbelieved Mary’s report of seeing the resurrected Jesus. They were walking from Jerusalem to the small town of Emmaus (west of Jerusalem).

These disciples knew that the tomb was empty but didn’t understand that Jesus had risen. To compound the problem, they were walking in the wrong direction—away from the fellowship of believers in Jerusalem. They didn’t recognize Jesus when he appeared beside them because he had changed his appearance.

After talking with these two disciples along the road and reprimanding them about their lack of knowledge of the Scriptures that described all that happened, Jesus revealed himself and then vanished (Luke 24:31).

**Luke 24:31**

“Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.”

Saints, then they realized who he was, they immediately returned to Jerusalem and reported that they too had seen Jesus. But still, no one believed them.

**14 Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.**

Saints, Jesus finally appeared to the eleven disciples together (Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, had killed himself). Jesus rebuked them for their unbelief. Jesus had foretold his own resurrection.

**Matthew 16:21**

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

Saints, every time he had told them he would die, he had also told them that he would rise again. Saints, throughout the Bible the writers prophesied all that had happened to Jesus and also spoke of his resurrection. The disciples had no excuse for the stubborn refusal to believe.

**15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**

Saints, this is the Great Commission. The disciples had been trained well, and they had seen the risen Lord. God had given Jesus authority over heaven and earth.

On the basis of that authority, Jesus told his disciples to make more disciples as they preached, baptized, and taught. With this same authority, Jesus still commands us to tell everyone everywhere the Good News.

**16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.**

Saints, the disciples were commanded to baptize people because baptism unites a believer with Jesus Christ in his or her death to sin and resurrection to new life.

**Acts 10:40-48**

40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins." 44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, 47 Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Saints, Jesus did not say that those who were not baptized would be condemned, but that anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. Baptism symbolizes submission to Christ, a willingness to live God’s way, and identification with God’s covenant people.

**17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."**

Saints, as the disciples fulfilled their commission, and indeed as others believed and went on to spread the gospel, miraculous signs would accompany them. As with Jesus’ miracles, these signs would authenticate the source of their power and draw people to belief.

**19 So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.**

Saints, these final verses end where the book of Acts begins. Luke wrote in Acts that Jesus appeared to various people over a period of forty days before he ascended (Acts 1:9).

As the disciples stood and watched, Jesus was taken up into heaven. Jesus’ physical presence left the disciples, but the Holy Spirit soon came to comfort them and empower them to spread the gospel (Acts 2:1-4).

See Chart>

**Acts 2:1-4**

1 Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Saints, Jesus’ work of salvation was completed, and he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand where he has authority over heaven and earth (see also Romans 8:34; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1).

**Romans 8:34**

Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

**Hebrews 1:3**

“who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high…”

**Hebrews 8:1**

“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens”

**20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.** Saints, While Jesus’ work on earth was completed, the disciples’ work was just beginning. This verse compacts the book of Acts. These doubting, stubborn disciples turned into powerful preachers who went everywhere and preached. God worked with them—giving them peace, strength through persecutions, and confirmation of their message with miraculous signs.

**Hebrews 2:4**

“God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will”

Mark’s Gospel emphasizes Christ’s power, as well as his servanthood. Jesus’ life and teaching turned the world upside down. The world sees power as a way to gain control over others. But Jesus, with all authority and power in heaven and earth, chose to serve others. He held children in his arms, healed the sick, acted patiently with his hardheaded disciples, and died for the sins of the world. Following Jesus means receiving this same power to serve. As believers, we are called to be servants of Christ. As Christ served, so we are to serve.

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**